

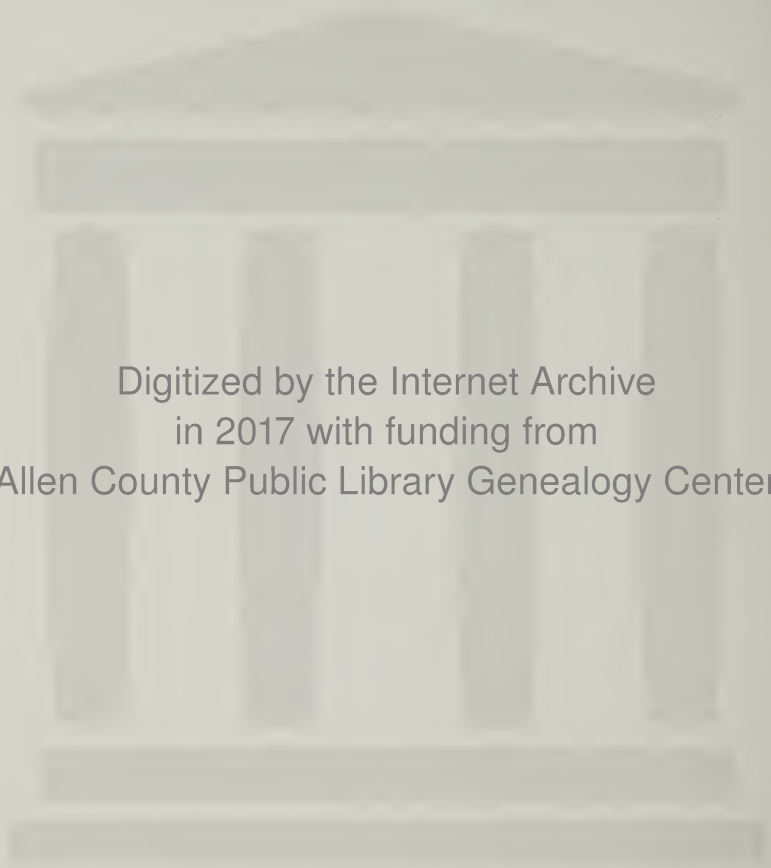
*The Story
of
Orton Plantation*

*with references to other places of interest
on the Cape Fear River*

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*As gathered from various
histories and documents
by James Laurence Sprunt*

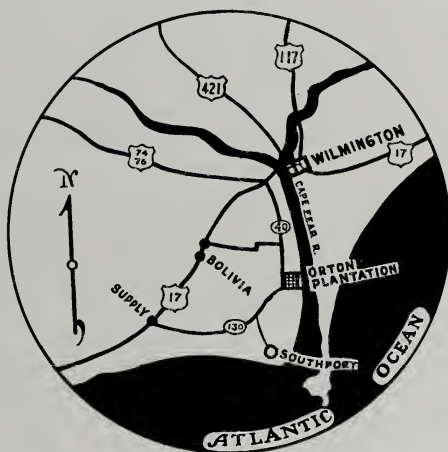




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*The Story
of
Orton Plantation*



Orton Plantation can be reached easily from U. S. 17, south of Wilmington, North Carolina.

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Wilmington, North Carolina

1958

Orton's Story

ORTON PLANTATION is situated about half way between Wilmington and Southport, North Carolina on the west bank of the Cape Fear River. Cape Fear acquired its forbidding name from the adjacent Frying Pan Shoals which extend many miles out into the Atlantic. This section of South-eastern North Carolina, composed largely of New Hanover and Brunswick Counties and known as the Lower Cape Fear, was settled in 1725 by a group of younger members of established families from the northeastern section of the State, then named Albemarle and from the Charleston area of what is now South Carolina. A son of Governor James Moore of South Carolina, Colonel Maurice Moore, was their leader. He was appointed to this position for his outstanding services by the owners of the land, the Lords Proprietors, a group of eight adherents of King Charles II, who were given a vast territory in the new world, from the Atlantic to the "South Seas", known as Carolina, for their devotion to the King's interests in the days of his exile. Two failures at settlement had occurred in 1661 and 1665—the first by a group of unauthorized New Englanders and the second by a party of several hundred Barbadians, sent by their governor Sir John Yeamans, baronet, who also had been made Governor of Carolina by the Lords Proprietors. After a year of hardship and unavoidable neglect, these Barbadians found their way by land to the north.

Colonel Moore's group of friends came with him from Albemarle and were joined by another of South Carolina friends and relatives, led by his younger brothers, Roger and Nathaniel. A favorable spot, about one mile south of Orton was chosen for their town to be named Brunswick, in honor of the Royal family that succeeded the Stuarts, soon to become the principal port of the State on account of the river channel's greater depth than the sounds and inlets of the previously settled Albemarle region. Brunswick, however, despite its formidable name and expectations of its founders, did not become a large town, for the settlers preferred building their homes on their newly acquired lands, called plantations. These estates extended a few miles south of the town to about thirty miles northward and were all situated on high spots on the banks of the river and its many tributaries, for in those days of no highways nor railroads, rivers, bays and creeks were all important to pioneers everywhere.

Other settlers of means steadily increased the number of plantation owners and established Newton, a rival town to Brunswick, some fifteen miles up the river, and in a few years the Lower Cape Fear became a prosperous area. Its vast forests of virgin pine and other valuable trees afforded an unlimited supply of timber, spars and naval stores (tar pitch and turpentine), so vital to the great fleets of wooden ships of the day, that England subsidized this source to equalize the lower freight costs from Norway. In addition, the forests and streams teemed with game and fish; these natural resources lasted for about one hundred and fifty years.

Many of the plantations were self sufficient entities with a part of the slaves trained as carpenters, blacksmiths, coopers and so on. "Tasks" were apportioned often to the slave instead of hours, and the more industrious had frequently hours of daylight for leisure or work on their gardens. The

introduction of rice culture necessitated a copious supply of fresh water; this was obtained readily by the simple process of constructing dams across convenient creeks and allowing the impounded water to cover a wide area. Such reservoirs, aptly named "reserves" in South Carolina, made possible the use of their overflow to power several types of mills. While the quantity of Cape Fear rice in no way compared to the volume of the vast rice areas in South Carolina, its quality was of such high grade that it was used largely as seed by the more Southern planters.

A LEADING RICE PLANTATION

Orton was once among the leading rice plantations. Its "reserve" is over six miles in length and averages about one quarter mile in width. It provided fine duck shooting in bygone days, and for years afforded one of the few sanctuaries of the American egret when this beautiful bird was threatened with extinction. The plantation period flourished up to the end of the War between the States but due to loss of slaves and capital, the greater part had to be abandoned; many famous places reverted to the forest and in some instances, their names were forgotten. Of the few that survived, Orton has perhaps preserved most successfully its identity, for when the Northern troops overran the Lower Cape Fear at the fall of Fort Fisher—thus cutting off General Lee's last source of supply—they used the house as a hospital and although it was abandoned for a period of fifteen to twenty years, it was rehabilitated successfully in the early 1880's.

Colonel Maurice Moore first owned the land to be known as Orton, but disposed of it almost immediately to his brother Roger, who developed it into perhaps the most famous of the lower Cape Fear plantations. His first house was destroyed by local Indians who in turn were obliterated by "King" Roger—as he became known eventually for his masterful personality and generosity, and his next home was built on his adjoining plantation "Kendal". About 1735, however, Mr. Moore built again at Orton and established his family there. The Moores and their descendants have been distinguished leaders of the Cape Fear Country ever since. From reliable sources it is thought that they lived originally in Westmoreland County, England, which contains the beautiful lakes (Windermere, etc.), the large town Kendal and a small settlement known as Orton—(no other reason can be found for the names of Orton and Kendal Plantations). At some indefinite date they were supposed to have been granted lands in Ireland. There they were known as O'Moore, but the first authentic reference to the family in Hume's history is as follows (speaking of the Wars of Religion between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland): "A gentleman, called Roger Moore, much celebrated among his countrymen for valor and capacity formed the project (in 1641) of expelling the English and engaged all the heads of the native Irish in the conspiracy, especially Sir Phelim O'Neale, the representative of the Tyrone family, and Lord Maguire. Unable to control the fury of the Irish and horrified by their atrocities, Moore fled the country and went to Flanders". This quotation is from Colonel Alfred Moore Waddell (one of the great contributors to Cape Fear history) in his book concerning his ancestor "A Colonial Officer and his Times." Colonel Waddell then quotes from Clarendon's "History of the Rebellion" the fact that Sir John Yeamans' father, High Sheriff of Bristol in Ireland, was hanged by the Parliamentary Governor for conspiring with Prince Rupert. Along with many survivors of the Stuart adherents, John Yeamans, son of the executed High Sheriff, was banished to Barbados, one of the several small

Caribbean Islands in possession of the English. It is established unquestionably that the Moores too, were Barbadians—whether Irish Roger Moore went there from Flanders, or his son, is another hiatus in the family history, for the Moores left Barbados with Sir John Yeamans for South Carolina and James Moore, father of Maurice, Roger, Nathaniel and others, married the step-daughter of Sir John and succeeded him as Governor of South Carolina.

In 1665 Sir John Yeamans sent from Barbados the unsuccessful group of settlers to the Lower Cape Fear, which had been recommended as the proper spot in Carolina for settlement to the Lords Proprietors by Long, Hilton and Fabian, leaders of an exploratory voyage to the vast new territory granted the Proprietors. These would-be settlers chose a site about six miles north of Orton and named it Charles Town in honor of Charles I “The Martyr King”—executed by Cromwell and the Parliamentary party. They also called the river “The Charles” but were destined to an early failure. The site of abandoned Charles Town thereafter was known as Old Town, and eventually became, under that name, a well known plantation. It reverted to the local Indians and some years later a group of notorious pirates led by the renegade British Major Steed Bonnet and Richard Worley established themselves at the mouth of the river, now the town of Southport, and preyed so actively on the coastwise commerce of the successfully established small southern Carolina settlement of the second Charleston that, in 1719, an expedition commanded by Colonel Rhett of Charleston, sailed into the Cape Fear River and decisively defeated them. A number of captive pirates, including Bonnet, were afterwards hanged in Charleston harbor. Some of the pirates ashore escaped in small boats and, in the opinion of Captain Samuel A. Ashe, another famous Cape Fear historian, joined a group of Indians up the river and founded a tribe, which when discovered decades later, were in possession of textiles and firearms.

During the years when the Cape Fear Country was no man’s land, the Albemarle grew steadily, extending down to what is now New Bern, to the mounting animosity of the local Indians who, in 1711, led by the fierce Tuscarora tribe, began a war of extermination. In answer to a desperate appeal the settlers of southern Carolina promptly despatched expeditions of whites and friendly Indians commanded by Colonel James Moore and his brother Maurice. The Tuscaroras were defeated so decisively that the majority of them left Carolina, founded a town in Pennsylvania and eventually joined their kindred in New York State, the famous “Five Nations”—thereafter known as the “Six”. They now are Canadians and are said to be of striking appearance “Chautauqua” the name of a town in New York, and the term for a type of lectures popular some decades ago, is from their language.

Major Maurice Moore remained in the Albemarle, married the wealthy widow Swann and lived near Edenton. There he distinguished himself by leading a group of courageous citizens in opposition of the questionable leniency of Governor Eden and his Secretary toward the pirate Blackbeard, who was permitted to come and go as he pleased in the Governor’s domain. Blackbeard was killed eventually by Lieutenant Maynard and a group of Virginians after a hand to hand encounter.

In 1719 Major Moore returned to South Carolina in command of a relief expedition of whites and friendly Indians, when the South Carolina Indians rose against the white settlers there, and was successful also in defeating this uprising.

Some time after this, he negotiated for South Carolina, a treaty of peace with the Cherokee Indians in the western section of the State.

Maurice Moore, after disposing of the area to be known as Orton, established his plantation "The Vats" some miles north of Wilmington on the northeast branch of the river, where perhaps the greatest part of the famous Colonial plantations were concentrated. The last episode of his extraordinary career that history has recorded, was a violent and successful controversy with Governor Burrington over possession of lands adjacent to Stag Park. A typewritten copy of an old document, written evidently in the 1840's, found in the library of the late Thomas W. Davis—author unknown, records the following:

No. 1—

"Being among the first settlers of North Carolina, Colonel Maurice Moore was almost constantly engaged in warfare with the Coree and Tuscarora Indians, which tribes he ultimately weakened so much as to compel them to emigrate and join the "Six Nations". On one occasion observing an unusual bustle across the Cape Fear at a high sandhill called the "Sugar Loaf", he took his spy glass and discovered they were Indians, collected in considerable numbers for a drunken frolic. His residence was at or near Orton, nearly opposite the "Sugar Loaf". As soon as it was dark, he took a favorite domestic called 'Tony' and crossed the river considerably above the Indians, stole silently to a post of observation and finding they were all asleep with their arms stacked in the center, he directed his men to assist him in drawing the balls from the guns and then replaced them just as they were before. He then retired a short space and with his men whooped and yelled until they were all roused and flew to arms, giving their war whoops, and there stood but two enemies—the feared and hated Moore and his man Tony. They all took deliberate aim at Colonel Moore and fired—supposing now he must be slain, when lo! there he stood, quite uninjured. Immediately taking advantage of their consternation, he commanded them to throw down their arms. This they did and Tony and he having tied them with cords brought for the purpose, they carried them off triumphantly as prisoners. Orton is the present home of Doctor F. J. Hill.

No. 2—

One evening returning from some expedition with only his man Tony, they arrived late at a ferry and there on the opposite side which was high land, stood a party of six Indians. Colonel Moore's horses were tired and on either side of a narrow causeway was an immense swamp. Retreat was impossible. He had no arms, only a short whip, as was used in those days. "We must brazen it out, Tony", said the Colonel. The latter boldly stepped forward to the landing. "How dare you, you Indian dogs, to try to use a flat coming for Colonel Moore?" Seizing the foremost Indian, he commenced a vigorous application of the whip—at the same time he called out "Hand them to me, Tony, hand them to me." Panic stricken, some of the poor savages jumped into the river, others ran to the swamp. Taking advantage of the momentary discomfiture, Colonel Moore precipitately crossed the river and left his enemies on the swamp side. By many artifices he had obtained the reputation of a charmed life and the Indians believed he could only be killed by a silver bullet, which helped to intimidate them.

About this time the waters of the Cape Fear were infested by a suspicious vessel owned and commanded by Captain Teach (nick-named Black Beard). He was haughty and daring. Frequently going to Wilmington and finding himself neglected by the gentlemen of town and country, he got it circulated that he intended to revenge himself. Upon this, most thought it best to entertain him. After a while he remarked to Colonel Maurice Moore that the latter seemingly, would not invite him to his home. So, he insolently sent a card purporting that he would do himself the pleasure of dining with Colonel Moore on a certain day. Colonel Moore replied that he would not be received and forbade his coming to the house under pain of opposition. At the time appointed Black Beard's vessel was seen sailing slowly down the river and anchored near the Colonel's residence. There, on the beach drawn out to receive him, stood the intrepid Colonel with all his slaves and a small party of militia, armed in the most inefficient way with a red flag flying. Upon this Captain Teach took a trumpet and advised him to submit quietly, as with one broadside the pirate could blow him and his tatterdemalions to the moon. "Fire," said the Colonel, "for only over my dead body will you enter my house." A boat was lowered from Teach's vessel. It bore a white flag and a deputation, bearing an elegant fowling piece, splendidly mounted with silver. A polite card was presented with Captain Teach's compliments and expressions of respect for a brave man though an enemy, and requesting Colonel Moore to accept the gun as a peculiar token of respect. Colonel Moore had drawn on himself the displeasure of the pirate by reproving himself, any visit from the latter. The gun is still in the possession of some branch of the Moore family. Colonel Maurice was the father of Judge Maurice and General James Moore".

The author of these remarkable anecdotes undoubtedly confused King Roger Moore with Colonel Maurice Moore in his account of the Indians on "Sugar Loaf" and again in placing Black Beards vessel in the Cape Fear. This incident must have occurred during Colonel Moore's sojourn near Edenton where Black Beard frequently visited. Black Beard was killed near Edenton in 1718 before the settlement of the Lower Cape Fear by Colonel Moore and his party in 1725.

"KING" ROGER MOORE

Roger Moore, the proprietor of "Orton" and "Kendal" plantations, seems to have succeeded Colonel Maurice Moore in the dominant position of the early history of the Lower Cape Fear, for he was characterized by a young English gentleman in 1734 as being the "Chief gentleman in all Cape Fear" in an account of his visit to this section in 1734 from Charleston. His long account of his trip from Charleston to Lake Waccamaw is, in part, as follows: " - - - Mr. Roger Moore hearing we were come (to Brunswick), was so kind as to send fresh horses for us to come up to his house, which we did, and were kindly received by him, he being the chief gentleman in all Cape Fear. His house is built of brick and exceedingly pleasantly situated about two miles from the town and almost half a mile from the river, though there is a creek comes close up to the door between two beautiful meadows about three miles length. He has a prospect of the town of Brunswick and of another beautiful brick house, a building about half a mile from him, belonging to Eleazar Allen, late Speaker of the Commons House of Assembly in the province of South Carolina". Then after a long account

of his travels up to Lake Waccamaw in which he describes other visited plantations and their owners, he returned to Orton to spend another night on his journey back to Charleston: "When I was about half way over the bay I intended to stop at the next spring and take a tiff of punch; but by some unfortunate accident, I know not how, when I came within sight of the spring, my bottle unluckily broke and I lost every drop of my shrub but examining my bag I accidentally found a bottle of cherry brandy with some gingerbread and cheese, which I believe good Mrs. Moore ordered to be put up unknown to me. I drank two drams of that, not being willing it should all be lost in case it should break".

A noted authority, Mr. William B. McKoy states that by 1735 there were substantial houses on both Orton and Kendal and it is evident that Roger Moore moved from Kendal to Orton about that time. Mrs. Moore was the sister of Mrs. Eleazar Allen, and Roger Moore's sister was the wife of William Dry (the first), one of the most prominent townsmen of Brunswick. These gentlemen (and others) united in a long and bitter controversy with Gabriel Johnston, the successor of Burrington as Governor in 1734, over the project to move the Collectorship of Customs and other important public offices from Brunswick to Wilmington some fifteen miles up the river. Johnston's patron was Spencer Compton, first Earl of Wilmington, and a gentleman of great prominence in England.

Among the first acts of Governor Johnston was the change of the town's name from Newton to Wilmington, in honor of Spencer Compton's title. The move engineered by the governor to supplant Brunswick finally succeeded when the chairman of his council of eight members—four of the Moore faction and four of his—ruled that, as Chairman, it was his privilege to break the tie vote, by voting twice. The repercussion of King Roger's opposition to Governor Johnston in this and other matters finally reached the notice of the King who paid Mr. Moore the oblique compliment of designating him and the followers as "those pestiferous Moores".

Among the known outstanding services of King Roger was his membership for years in the Council, a body of eight of the most influential citizens entrusted with considerable responsibility for the proper administration of public affairs. "In exercising his (the Governor's) power and discharging his duties it was necessary for him to consult the Council, and in several matters he could not act without their advice and consent" (Raper). Again in 1735, he served with Eleazar Allen, Nathaniel Rice and Captain James Innes on a Commission to fix the boundary line between North and South Carolina. He died in 1750 leaving an estate of 250 slaves, many thousands acres of land and other valuables. His two sons—half brothers—William and George inherited Orton and Kendal. William Moore died a year or two later and his son sold Orton some years afterwards to Richard Quince, one of the prominent merchants of Brunswick.

Just before the Revolution, his son Parker Quince, with other merchants of Brunswick, sent a cargo of supplies to the people of Boston when that port was placed under a form of embargo by the British Government.

One of Mr. Quince's sailing ships brought to Brunswick in the winter of 1775 a group of distinguished passengers, among them a Miss Janet Schaw. In her diary (which will be referred to later) she describes Mr. Quince, host to her party for her first night in the province, as follows: "We got safe on shore and tho' quite dark landed from the boat with little trouble, and proceeded thro' rows of tar and pitch to the house of a merch

(sic) to whom we had been recommended. He received us in a hall which tho' not very orderly, had a cheerful look to which a large carron stove filled with Scotch coal not a little contributed. The night was bitterly cold and we gathered round the hearth with great satisfaction, and the master of the house gave us a hospitable welcome. This place is called Brunswick and tho' the best seaport in the province, the town is very poor. A few scattered houses on the edge of the woods, without streets or regularity. These are inhabited by merchants, of whom Mr. Quince (Quince), our host is first in consequence. He is deeply engaged in the new system of politicks, in which they are all, more or less, tho Mr. Dry, the Collector of the Customs, is the most zealous and talks treason by the hour".

Mr. Quince was a Commissioner of the town, Chairman of the Superior Court, a Church Warden of St. Philips, a Judge of Vice Admiralty, a Justice of the Peace, a member of the Wilmington Committee of Public Safety and a member of the Committee of the Sons of Liberty. He came originally from Ramsgate, England, died in 1778 and was buried in the Church yard of St. Philip's. His tomb though battered by Northern shell-fire and marred by vandals, still remains as one of the most imposing there and the greater part of its epitaph is still legible. In 1796 Richard Quince, Jr. sold Orton to Benjamin Smith, who moved there from his plantation "Belvedere" near Wilmington. The new proprietor of Orton also purchased the remains of the abandoned town of Brunswick and the small estate known as Russellborough, lying between Orton and the town, the home of Governors Dobbs and Tryon, and incorporated these two areas into the boundary of Orton.

During the heavy bombardment of Fort Anderson, built around the walls of St. Philip's Church in the abandoned town of Brunswick, by the Northern fleet, following the fall of Fort Fisher across the river at the end of the Civil War, a cannon ball struck and demolished a simple tombstone bearing the epitaph "Here lies the body of Benjamin Smith, one time Governor of North Carolina". A far larger stone would have been needed to list the many eminent positions held by Governor Smith in the course of his remarkable career. A direct descendant of Thomas Smith, one of the few men designated "Landgrave" by the Lords Proprietors, and a grandson of King Roger Moore, he inherited considerable wealth and many talents. "When only twenty-one, he served as aide de camp to General Washington in the retreat from Long Island in August of 1779 and behaved with conspicuous gallantry in the brilliant action in which Moultrie in 1779, drove the British from Port Royal Island and checked for a time the invasion of South Carolina". A Charleston paper recounted "He gave on many occasions such varied proof of activity and distinguished bravery as to merit the approbation of his impartial Country" (quotations from a biographical sketch by Captain S. A. Ashe).

Besides his war record, Benjamin Smith was a member of the first Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina, to which he gave 20,000 acres of Tennessee land, granted him for his war service. He was elected Governor of the State in 1810 and was active in reforming the harsh criminal laws of his day, and in advocating education for all the people. As Governor he was instrumental in obtaining a charter for a town at the mouth of the Cape Fear, named, in his honor, Smithville (now Southport). He served three years as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Masons of North Carolina from 1808 to 1811. It is said that General Washington on

his visit to the Cape Fear, presented him with a Grand Master's ceremonial apron. Many decades later the Masons marked the spot, where his grave was supposed to be, with the marble tablet now in St. Philips Churchyard.

His services to the Country and State were however marred seriously by his ungovernable temper. This led to such a grave quarrel with his brother over land boundaries that the latter changed his name to his grandmother's (Rhett) and moved to South Carolina, where his descendants have perpetuated this distinguished family. It also involved Benjamin Smith in many duels, three of the most famous with his cousin Captain Maurice Moore, grandson of the original Maurice Moore, the second with General Howe and the third with Thomas Leonard, a political rival. In the Moore and Leonard duels he was seriously wounded and carried to his grave the ball from Leonard's pistol.

Colonel Alfred Moore Waddell has an interesting chapter in one of his histories devoted to the Moore-Smith "affair of honor". Duels were so frequent in the South, from earliest times until some years after the Civil War, that a booklet, "The Code of Honor", specifying in detail the proper conduct of such affairs, was published. Its final direction stated in substance that, when affronts were of so serious a nature that neither duellist's honor could be satisfied, shot guns and buck shot at ten paces should be used. It wound up with the observation that so far as the author knew, there was no record of either participant surviving this type of procedure.

Benjamin Smith's life ended in a tragic anticlimax. Having lost a considerable part of his fortune by endorsing the note of a friend, he undertook most unsuccessfully, to perform a government contract and, in 1826, died a pauper, so heavily in debt that his body was about to be seized by creditors under a gruesome law then in force. Learning of this, a group of his remaining friends led by General Joseph Gardner Swift of New York—the local United States Engineer stationed on the Cape Fear,—and Governor Smith's "second" in several of his duels—abducted the body in the dead of night and buried it in a secret place some distance from Smithville. Years later, General Swift, remembering his unfortunate friend's desire to be buried in St. Philips Churchyard, made a special trip to Smithville with the purpose of exhuming the body and burying it there. After considerable effort, the secret grave was located but, so badly disintegrated were the remains, that the friends were not certain that they had located the proper body. However the identity of the remains was established by one of the group, whose courageous loyalty overcame her aversion to the task of probing with her hand in the remains and finding Leonard's pistol bullet. This same intrepid lady when her patience became exhausted by the continual badgering of a group of callow young Northern officers, quartered in her home after the surrender of the South, as to when she was going to take the Oath of Allegiance—as all the defeated Southerners were forced to do—told them in no uncertain tone, that they could take all of the Lower Region, boil it down to a teaspoonful, and she would swallow it in preference to take such an oath. (A great part of this account of Governor Smith's activities was taken from a most interesting Chapter in the book "Tales Old and New of the Lower Cape Fear," by Louis T. Moore, our current historian and direct descendant of the famous King Roger Moore.)

The following advertisement from "The Charleston Gazette" in 1824 bears this evidence of Benjamin Smith's financial debacle: "Will be sold at Public Auction at the Court House in the town of Wilmington, N. C. on

the first day of December next: All that plantation lying in the County of Brunswick, State of North Carolina, known as Orton late the residence of Governor Benjamin Smith, containing 4975 acres, more or less. Of this track between 400 and 500 acres is swamp land of a strong and fertile soil, which, it is believed will produce at least 1000 lbs of cotton or four tierces of rice to the acre, and is more capable of being well drained than any on the river, the fall of the tide being at least 4½ feet. Orton is a valuable and beautiful plantation situated on the Cape Fear River about 16 miles below Wilmington and about fourteen miles above Smithville, a place in high repute for its solubrity and pleasantness as a summer retreat. Included in the premises is a very superior and never failing mill stream with an excellent dam, wanting only flood gates. The rice machine mill and gin having been recently destroyed by fire. The pond may be used at all times as a reservoir of water to flow the low lands, thus rendering Orton one of the most valuable rice plantations in the country”.

In 1757 there came to Brunswick a Mr. William Hill after finishing his studies at Harvard University. There he married Margaret Moore daughter of Nathaniel, at Orton Plantation, the home of her uncle, King Roger Moore. Mr. Hill became a leading merchant in Brunswick and rendered a great service to the community as a lay reader in St. Philip's Church during the many intervals when there was no ordained rector in charge. He was once host to the famous Bostonian Josiah Quincy and officiated at St. Philip's during Quincy's visit.

His grandson, Doctor Frederick Jones Hill, became the owner of Orton in 1826, about two years after the advertisement appeared. Dr. Hill, like his grandfather, was held in highest esteem for his benevolences and services, especially in the cause of the common school system, of which he was the most influential advocate. He contributed to Orton's interest and beauty by changing King Rogers' "story and a half" house by adding, about 1840, another floor and attic and installing the four fluted Doric columns in the style then popular from New England to Mississippi, called "Greek Revival" or "Neo Classic", instituted by Thomas Jefferson, and now the main part of the house as it stands today—(the wings were not added until 1910). John Hill his brother, another doctor, owned Lilliput, the plantation of Eleazar Allen to which the young English guest of King Roger in 1734 referred. This Dr. John Hill was buried at Orton in 1847 in King Roger's graveyard.

Dr. Frederick Hill and his wife having no children of their own, adopted William E. Boudinot as a son, and "raised as a daughter" Annie W. Davis, Mrs. Hill's niece. Dr. Hill had residences in Pittsboro and Wilmington—the latter he bequeathed on his death in 1861 to Bishop Thomas Atkinson at the death of Mrs. Hill. It is not known how much of Dr. Hill's time was spent at Orton from 1826 to 1854. The business affairs there were managed by his nephew Mr. William A. Lord, a descendant of one of the early citizens of Brunswick.

In 1854 Dr. Hill sold Orton to Mr. Thomas Calezance Miller, who had married, at Orton, Mrs. Hill's niece, Annie Davis. There is an interesting tradition in the Miller family concerning the origin of their name to the effect that Mr. Miller's grandfather was the son of a nobleman who was forced to flee his native land for America, after the execution of his father and mother. The Captain of the ship on which this young nobleman, Louis

Leopold Calezance de la Marc, embarked, was named Miller and, for the purpose of disguising his identity, de la Marc took the Captain's name.

One of the Miller slaves lived to a ripe old age, ended in the 1920's. She was known as Sister Kate and unfortunately was not encouraged to recall any incidents of her early life. She did volunteer on one occasion that the Millers had a glass house at Orton where they raised oranges. A letter from one of Mr. and Mrs. Miller's daughters to a relative in Wilmington (Mr. Swift Miller Boatwright) reads in part:

"I remember the last time I saw the place, it was beautiful beyond imagination. The family having spent the winter there my mother and father took great pleasure and pains in adding to the beauties of nature without destroying. We remained quite late that spring and when we left the rice was about a foot high, looking like immense green velvet carpets reaching to the river. My father owned two schooners, the "Blue Perch" and the "Eureka"; once we sailed down on the Blue Perch, and among the guests were Mr. Eugene Martin and Cousin Horatio Davis; Cousin Anna Wright and Miss Josephine Ashe were among the guests the last time we were there in 1864. As there was a fort on the place (Fort Anderson) and the gun boats anchored in the river, the young ladies had beaux galore, and my mother and father while paying every attention necessary always let their guests do as they pleased, and made them feel perfectly at home. There were salt works during the war that were a Godsend, for even up in Pittsboro and around in the country there my mother gave generously to the poor who needed it, of course without charge. My brother Tom and I when we meet talk so much about our young days down there and in our dear old home Wilmington, and he remembers climbing up into the window seats in the old Church at the City of Brunswick. We long but vainly to visit back there." In another part of this letter, the writer mentioned that her father died just after the Civil War ended "Then of course everything went to pieces and we lost it" (Orton.)

AFTER LEE'S SURRENDER

Everything indeed "went to pieces" so far as the majority of the plantation owners was concerned, after General Lee's surrender. Were it not for the fact that the war's end occurred in the spring of the year, enabling the defeated Confederates to plant every possible acre in food crops in time for harvest, many would have been in danger of starvation.

In 1872 Orton was advertised for sale at public auction, to satisfy claims against it, and sold in 1876 to a young Englishman named Currer Richardson Roundel. This gentleman was prominently connected in England but was evidently somewhat deranged mentally for soon after his purchase—and doubtless after estimating the heavy expense of repairs—he committed suicide.

In the late eighteen seventies, Mr. Roundel's heirs succeeded in selling Orton to Major C. M. Stedman and his brother in law Captain D. R. Murchison, who about 1880 sold Orton to Colonel K. M. Murchison, the latter's older brother. Colonel Murchison, of Highland Scotch ancestry, was born at Manchester near Fayetteville and after being graduated from the University of North Carolina, went to New York and laid the foundation to a successful naval store and cotton business, with offices in Wilmington under Captain Murchison, and in Fayetteville under their brother in law. At the beginning of the Civil War he returned home and volun-

teered in the Confederate Army where he eventually became Colonel of the 54th N. C. Regiment which took an active part in the Virginia Campaigns.

Colonel Murchison was a prisoner of war for many months in Johnson Island where many of his fellow officers were reduced to eating rats on account of starvation rations served by their captors, in revenge for similar treatment of prisoners held by the Confederates,—who, it might be added, were badly in need of food themselves, and tried in vain to exchange prisoners.

At the end of hostilities Colonel Murchison returned to New York and revived his business so successfully that he was able to retire and restore Orton to its former state. It is said that the vast sum—for those impoverished days—of twenty five thousand dollars, was required for the repair of the rice fields alone. Trees were growing in parts of Orton House and the whole plantation in a sad state of decay.

He also built a hotel in Wilmington called “The Orton”, in its day one of the best on the South Atlantic, but delegated its operation to others as he did with the business affairs of the plantation. The Murchison National Bank in Wilmington—for years the mainstay of local business in Eastern North Carolina—grew out of the branch of the Murchison business here.

Orton was purchased from the estate of Colonel Murchison, who died in 1904, by a son-in-law, the late James Sprunt LLD, and presented to Mrs. Sprunt. He was the “Son” of the cotton exporting firm of Alexander Sprunt and Son, for decades after the Civil War known over Europe as one of the most prominent and reliable. In his early youth Dr. Sprunt served as Purser on several Confederate Blockade runners, swift little ships of rakish design, owned largely by British capital, which dashed through the blockading fleet of Northern ships to export the South’s cotton at fabulous prices to the British cotton mills, and import necessities and luxuries for the beleaguered South.

Dr. Sprunt’s interests in life, aside from his business affairs, lay in religion and literature. He contributed generously to both by building Churches and establishing a large Missionary School in China. He gave a wing to the local hospital and named in memory of a young daughter—now merged into the general hospital—and established a fund for the aid of crippled children, administered by the late Dr. William S. Baer—the famous orthopedist—at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore.

He also endowed a series of lectures at the Union Theological Seminary at Richmond, Virginia, and gave generously to worthy causes in general.

In his later years of semi-retirement, Mr. Sprunt was the author of several books on Cape Fear history, and his exciting stories of the Blockade are of particular interest. In recognition of his literary contributions, Mr. Sprunt was elected to honorary membership in the Alpha Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, at William and Mary College, and given the honorary degree of LLD by the University of North Carolina.

Dr. Sprunt encouraged his wife, Colonel Murchison’s daughter Luola, in 1910 to add the wings to Orton house, designed by her brother K. M. Murchison, Jr., an architect, prominent in artistic circles in New York, and to begin designing and planting the garden.

Mrs. Sprunt served for a while as President of the North Carolina Society of Colonial Dames, and in her administration, several places of

historic interest were marked with appropriate legends in stone monuments. At her death in 1916 Mr. Sprunt had the Orton Chapel built as a memorial to her.

Mr. Sprunt in 1919 bought the adjoining plantation of Kendal and Lilliput from the estate of the late Frederick Kidder, a close friend of both the Murchison and Sprunt families. Mr. Kidder's large and commodious wooden house was destroyed by fire some years later. No trace of the original Moore home, nor of Eleazar Allen's on Lilliput, remained, and Mr. Allen's beautiful marble tomb, and others of his family, are now swallowed up by an almost impenetrable thicket of trees and brambles.

A SCOTTISH LADY'S VIEW

Among the many distinguished guests entertained at Orton none were more welcome than Mr. Charles M. Andrews, Professor of American History at Yale University, and his accomplished wife, in the winter of 1920. They had, some time before, discovered in the British Museum, an intensely interesting diary of a highly educated young Scottish lady named Janet Schaw. In it she describes her journey to the West Indies and her visit to her brother's plantation on the Cape Fear in the year 1775. Mr. and Mrs. Andrews became so absorbed in Miss Schaw's travels and comments on the prominent homes in which she was entertained, the manners and customs of the people she met, that they resolved to publish it. First however they travelled to the places described by Miss Schaw in order to corroborate her statements, and Wilmington was their first stop. Professor Andrews went daily with Mr. Sprunt on his fast day cruiser to Wilmington from Orton, and after some weeks of investigating old records, satisfied himself on the authenticity of the people and places Miss Schaw described. The book was afterwards published under the title "Journal of a Lady of Quality". They dedicated this work to Mr. Sprunt and its introduction by Mrs. Andrews pays a graceful compliment to his assistance and hospitality.

Unfortunately there is no mention in this Journal of Orton, but her references to other plantations on the Cape Fear near Orton, and to their owners, the people in general and the manners and customs of the time, are the most entertaining and revealing of any that are extant. Miss Schaw was an extreme loyalist; her comments on any act of disloyalty (rampant at the time of her visit) were vitriolic, however some of her observations are favorable, and of such interest that a random selection may be entertaining. " - - - We were in a phaeton and four belonging to my brother - - - during the first few miles I was charmed with the woods. The wild fruit trees are in full blossom, the ground under them covered with verdure and intermixed with flowers of various kinds made a pleasing scent. We stayed all the forenoon with him, saw his rice mills, his indigo works and timber mills. The vast command they have of water makes these works easily conducted."

Describing a ball in Wilmington:

"I have however gained some most amiable and agreeable acquaintances amongst the ladies, many of whom would make a figure in any part of the world and I will not fail to cultivate their esteem, as they appear worthy of mine."

"The ladies have burnt their tea in a solemn procession but they had delayed however till the sacrifice was not very considerable."

"We came to town yesterday by water and tho' it was excessively warm,

had a pleasant sail. Mr. Rutherford has a very fine boat with an awning to prevent the heat and six stout negroes to row her down which with the assistance of the tide was performed with ease in a very short time."

"- - - and indeed thro' the whole country are innumerable creeks that communicate with the main branches of the river and every tide receives a sufficient depth of water for boats of the largest size and even for small vessels, so that everything is water borne at a small charge and with great safety and ease."

"I will not give you any account of the culture of the rice as you have it very distinctly in Miller's dictionary and it is still the same method."

After criticising severely Robert Howe—afterwards a General in the Revolutionary Army—for his reputation as a "gay blade", Miss Schaw has this to say about him, and later concerning James Moore, son of Colonel Maurice Moore, and later one of the leaders of the Battle of Moore's Creek in which the loyal Highlanders were crushed: "But he has that polite gallantry which every man of good breeding ought to have - - - He is at present a candidate for the command of the army that he is raising - - - I wish he may get the command with all my heart, for he does not appear to me half so dangerous as another candidate a Colonel Moore whom I am compelled at once to dread and esteem. He is a man of a free property and a most unblemished character, has amiable manners; and a virtuous life has gained him the love of everybody, and his popularity is such that I am assured he will have more followers than any other man in the province. He acts from a steady tho' mistaken principle, and I am certain has no view nor design but what he thinks right and for the good of his country. He urges not a war of words, and when my brother told him he would not join him for he did not approve the cause, "Then do not" said he, "let every man be directed by his own ideas of right and wrong". If this man commands, be assured, he will find his enemies work. His name is James Moor (*sic*). Should you ever hear him mentioned, think of the character I gave him."

Of the other leaders of the Cape Fear patriots Miss Schaw has nothing but scorn; for the plight of the many fine citizens of the Cape Fear who remained loyal to the Crown, Miss Schaw has only the warmest sympathy, and her anger at the indignities heaped upon them is expressed with all the fervor of a real champion.

The temptation to continue Miss Schaw's comments and observations is hard to resist but for the sake of brevity her admiration of another native Carolinian must close these references:

"Early the next morning after I got to town I was waked by the sweetest chorister that ever I heard in my life, and of whose uncommon talents I had no warnings. It pitched on a Mulberry tree, close to the window of the apartment where I slept and began with the note of our thrush so full, that I never doubted it was our sober suited songstress, but presently I heard those of the black bird, which was succeeded by the shrill note of the lark, and after a few warbles, I heard the well known notes of our Linnet and Goldfinch. I could not believe that these various birds were here, yet to suppose that all the musick of a British grove was poured from one little pipe was not less surprising. I got up and opened the window shutter to take a peep at my musician, but softly as I unbarred it, he was scared, and I just saw on wing what they call here the Mocking bird - - - He is very

improperly named; for as he never heard one of the birds I mention, he cannot be said to mock or imitate them."

In his research of Miss Schaw's diary Professor Andrews assembled facts of Cape Fear history previously not incorporated in the earlier works of other authors, and added them in the appendix of the "Journal", an invaluable contribution. The account of Mr. Richard Quince in this story was taken bodily from it. Mr. and Mrs. Andrews later continued their research of Miss Schaw's travels in the West Indies and in Portugal, and made equally interesting comments on those places and people described by Miss Schaw.

Dr. Sprunt died in 1924 and his son James Laurence Sprunt became the present owner of the plantation. His contribution to Orton consists in opening the old Colonial road to Wilmington, which, after some years, was taken over by the state, hardsurfaced and designated as part of N. C. 40, (Prior to this Orton was accessible only by water) and about 1934 extended the area of his mother's garden. Its fine live oak trees—many planted by her—pine and cedars with the impressive columns and graceful wings of the old house centrally located and its profusion of camellia japonica, azalea and other ornamental plants, have impressed many visitors sufficiently to compare it with other professional gardens, older and more generally known. Many of its important parts were designed by the late eminent landscape architect, Robert Swann Sturtevant of Groton, Massachusetts and Nashville, Tennessee. Another considerable share of the planning and building of it too, should be given Churchill Bragaw, (who managed Orton for some years before World War II and gave his life to his Country in the fierce warfare in Italy, where he and his Company were kept on the front lines too long without relief) and to Kenneth Sprunt, who succeeded Churchill Bragaw after the end of the War.

The small estate, formerly the home of Colonial Governors Dobbs and Tryon is one half mile south of Orton Garden's entrance. The house was built on a hill overlooking the river, and within the remains of its foundations, the visitor reads this inscription on a stone marker:

—RUSSELLBOROUGH—

Erected by Captain John Russell, Commander of his Brittanic Majesty's sloop of war "Scorpion", who gave his name to this residence and tract of fifty-five acres of land adjacent to the town of Brunswick—subsequently owned and occupied by the British Governor and Commander-in-Chief

Arthur Dobbs
and later conveyed to his Excellency
William Tryon, Governor

On the 10th day of February, 1766 this building known as Tryon's Palace was surrounded by one hundred and fifty armed men of the Cape Fear led by George Moore of Orton and Cornelius Harnett, who resisted for the first time on this continent the authority of their Sovereign Lord, the King, by demanding from Governor Tryon the person of Captain Lobb, HMS Viper and the surrender of the odious Emblems of the British Parliament's Stamp Act, committed to his care, which had been brought to Brunswick by Captain Phipps in HMS Diligence—subsequently on the 21st day of February, 1766 at 10 A.M. a body of 500 Cape Fear men in arms

under Cornelius Harnett and Col. James Moore, surrounded this house and demanded the person of H. M. Comptroller, Mr. Pennington, and required of him an oath that he would never issue any stamped paper in the Province of North Carolina.

This monument by the N. C. Society of the Colonial Dames of America is composed of stones from the original foundation of Tryon's Palace, on this spot May 5, 1909.

Luola Murchison Sprunt, President

Gabrielle de R. Waddell, Vice-President

Carrie E. Prince, Secretary

This armed resistance to the Stamp Act was perhaps the outstanding event of Colonial history of this Lower Cape Fear Country.

The Stamp Act was the first attempt of the Crown to levy direct taxes on the American Colonies. It placed a tax upon their business and legal transactions, ostensibly to provide revenue for the maintenance of British soldiers, as a further bulwork against potential attack. The Colonists considered this as unnecessary and unfair, and had several of the great leaders of Britain on their side, (Chatham and Burke in particular) who agreed that the home country had profited enough through customs laws, which restricted the trade of the Colony to Britain.

The Stamp Act was passed by Parliament in March of 1765 and on the 28th of November the stamps were brought to Brunswick by HMS "Diligence," but a group of armed citizens prevented their landing. The "Diligence" was joined later by HMS "Viper" and on the 14th of January seized two merchant vessels (the "Dobbs" and "Patience") whose clearance papers were unstamped. This overt act enraged the citizens of both Brunswick and Wilmington. They marched down to Tryon's home (which had been previously surrounded by another armed band) and demanded that the unfortunate stamp master Pennington be surrendered to them—they had already forced Mr. Houston, the Stamp Master at Wilmington to abjure his office and were determined to exact the same oath from Pennington, who had taken refuge in Tryon's home. When Pennington told the Governor that he had no intention of retaining this dangerous position and would follow Houston's lead, Tryon ordered him to resign forthwith to him as Governor, before being coerced by the citizens. He afterwards took the oath required that he would not attempt to issue any of the "Odious Emblems" in this Colony. The final act of open resistance occurred in Wilmington when citizens seized a boat there loaded with supplies for the "Viper" and "Diligence" and threw the crew in jail. As these war ships had only one day's supply of provisions on hand, and further supplies being cut off, Tryon had to yield and the two merchant ships were released. Soon afterwards the Stamp Act was repealed by Parliament. Throughout this explosive period Governor Tryon already renowned as a man of great courage, acted with admirable forbearance and diplomacy. He had refused offers of a personal guard both by the citizens and by the Captains of the two warships anchored nearby the scene. He suffered no lack of respect or prestige from yielding to the aroused citizens, for soon afterwards he led a small army of Cape Fear men and crushed with great severity a group of small farmers banded together in a poorly armed group in Orange County called Regulators. They were in revolt to what they considered unfair fees exacted from them by local authorities. The fight is known in

our histories as the Battle of Alamance, and to the casual reader of history it seems strange that one group of citizens, having successfully revolted against unfairness, should have killed and hanged some of their fellow citizens for what they considered their rights.

In a forty-four page manuscript letter written by Governor Tryon on July 26, 1765 to his uncle, son of Earl Ferrers, (and published in 1957 by the North Carolina Historical Review) Tryon gives a detail description of the house at Russellborough into which he moved in June 1765. He did not succeed in buying it from Governor Dobb's son until 1767.

"This House which has so many assistances is of an oblong Square Built of Wood. It measures on the outside Side Faces forty five feet by thirty five feet, and is Divided into two Stories, Exclusive of the Cellars the Parlour Floor is about five feet above the Surface of the Earth. Each Story has four Rooms and three light Closets. The Parlour below & the drawing Room are 20 x 15 feet Each; Ceilings low. There is a Piazza Runs Round the House both Stories of ten feet Wide with a Ballustrade of four feet high, which is a great Security for my little girl. There is a good Stable and Coach Houses and some other Out Houses. If I continue in this House, which will depend on Capt. Dobbs' Resolution in the manner he disposes of his Effects here, I shall & must build a good Kitchen which I can do for Forty Pounds Sterling of 30F x 40F. The garden has nothing to Boast of except Fruit Trees—Peaches, Nectars, Figgs and Plumbs are in perfection and of good Sorts—I cut a Musk Meion this week which weighed 17½ Pounds. Apples grow extremely well here I have tasted Excellent Cyder the Produce of this Province. Most if not all kinds of garden greens and Pot herbs grow luxuriant with us".

As there was no regular Capital of the Province of North Carolina, nor any fitting edifice to accommodate meetings of the Assembly and Council, Governor Tryon was instrumental in designating New Bern as the Capital. He obtained the reluctant permission of the proper authorities to construct there what was later to be termed "the finest edifice in all the Colonies". This was to house the Royal Governor and his family and to provide suitable facilities for the legislature. It was designed by John Hawks who had accompanied Tryon to Brunswick, and to it Tryon and his family moved in 1770.

The heavy debt to the province contracted for this building and the resentment of the more populous sections of the State to the West that it was unfairly located, contributed largely to the Revolutionary feeling of North Carolinians. Soon after Tryon was transferred as Governor of New York, the next and last Royal Governor, Josiah Martin, lived there briefly until the outbreak of the War when he embarked at Brunswick, and left the country. During the Revolution it was occupied intermittently by Richard Caswell of Kinston, and Abner Nash, as Governors elected by the people. Soon after the Revolution the Capital was moved from New Bern. The central part and one of the wings of the "Palace" were destroyed by fire in 1798 and for around one hundred and fifty years the remaining wing served no real purpose.

The reason for this digression from the Cape Fear is to state the fact that Tryon's Palace is now a magnificent restoration (rebuilt from original plans found in London) by the eminent architect Mr. William G. Perry who had charge of the restoration of Williamsburg, Virginia. It should be opened for public inspection in 1958 and will provide a continual source of

pleasure and interest for tourists coming South on U. S. Route 17—or returning home on it.

Governor Arthur Dobbs resided at Russellborough for about ten years from 1754. In order to secure his residence there the estate was sold to him for a very small sum. Nothing of sufficient interest to be included here occurred during his administration. Tryon was considerably irked at Dobb's procrastination in vacating his office, but the sudden death of Dobbs necessitated Tryon's hasty return from his five hundred mile journey through the province, described in detail by the forty page manuscript letter:

"I reached Wilmington the 30th of March and to my surprise found they had buried the Governor and for want of a Clergy, the Funeral was performed by a Magistrate of Peace". (Governor Dobbs' unmarked grave is in St. Philips, location unknown).

When Tryon moved to New Bern, Russellborough became the home of William Dry, who changed its name to Bellfont (A. Lawrence Lee). It was burned by a British raiding party in May 1776 from Cornwallis' Army, which sailed up the river and captured Wilmington. For years its exact location was forgotten. After many unsuccessful efforts at finding it, Mr. Sprunt in the 1890's questioned an ancient colored man attending a camp meeting nearby, "Did you ever hear of Governor Dobbs? No Sir. Governor Tryon? No Sir". Then finally Mr. Sprunt asked if the old man had ever heard of any Governor who lived nearby "Oh yes Sir, I know where Governor Palace used to live!" and so was it located.

In 1909 when workmen excavating the stones and miniature bricks to provide a backing for the marble inscription found a rusty old bunch of keys and for years after the discovery of the foundations, intermittent nocturnal diggings for treasure were evidenced. One pile of soil showed bits of hardened clay with imprints of coins in them. It is said that one person found a pot of gold somewhere in the neighborhood, but kept it a secret.

At Russellborough—or nearby—occurred one of the most brutal duels on record in which the victor after wounding his opponent, beat him to death with the butt of his pistol.

THE RUINS OF ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH

Another half mile or so the same road ends at the venerable ruins of St. Philip's Church and its graveyard of old and battered tombs. Nothing else remains of the once historic town of Brunswick except a few stone foundations, scattered in the surrounding woods and a small well, masterfully constructed with curved bricks. These places now are practically inaccessible due to the growth of vines and brambles after a disastrous forest fire destroyed a stand of pine trees, so tall and thick that nothing of consequence could grow beneath them. Brunswick's history has been carefully preserved in the annals of the lower Cape Fear by several authors, among them the late Colonel A. M. Waddell and Mr. W. B. McKoy but the thesis of Mr. E. Lawrence Lee of the faculty of the University of North Carolina and now a Professor at The Citadel in Charleston, S. C. is the most detailed and authoritative. This was published in the North Carolina Historical Review of April 1952 and it is hoped that it may be incorporated some day in a work of greater scope.

The land set aside for the town consisted of 360 acres, 320 donated by Maurice Moore and forty by Roger Moore in 1725. There are only two streets on record, the one fronting the river was the Street of the Bay and

the next to its was named Second Street. It is recorded that there was a jail and a Court house, and in 1754 Governor Dobbs wrote that the town contained twenty families, at the time of the Revolution there were about 200 white and about fifty colored residents.

Among the early settlers, according to Professor Lee, were Dr. James Fergus, surgeon; Cornelius Harnett, James Espey, Hugh Blenning and William Lord, tavern keepers; John Wright, John Porter, Richard Quince and William Dry, Sr. merchants; John McDowell and Edward Scott, sea Captains; Thomas Brown and Edward Jones, carpenters; Richard Price, brickmaker; William Norton, blockmaker; Donald McKicho, tailor; and Hugh Campbell, Clerk of Court.

In later years there were among the residents William Gibson, Jonathan Caulkin and Thomas Dick, house carpenters; David Smeeth, ship's carpenter; Christopher Cains, blacksmith; John Cains, shoemaker; Alexander McKitchen, tailor; Christopher Wotten, sail maker; James McIlhenney, tavern keeper; Stephen Parker Newman, Revell Munro, and Thomas Mulford, sea captains; William Dry, Jr., and William Hill, port officials as well as merchants; and John Fergus, physician.

It has already been told that Governor Johnston, over the violent opposition of King Roger Moore and "The Family—as James Murray termed the Moore party—and by the devious means of the President of the Council voting twice succeeded in moving the important officials from Brunswick to Wilmington in 1740. However only smaller vessels could proceed up the river from Brunswick on account of the shallower depth of water, whereas the channel from Brunswick to the sea was sufficient to admit larger ships, and in consequence the relatively heavy cargoes of the all important naval stores had to be shipped from Brunswick. This resulted in the return of the port official back to Brunswick some time afterwards; this meant that all Cape Fear shipping was required to enter and clear again at Brunswick. But, with even this reprieve and the establishment of Brunswick as the County Seat of the newly former County from the area of New Hanover, the old town was doomed. Wilmington was so much nearer the center of important plantations and the new settlements to the west that the discouraged inhabitants finally abandoned the town after the Revolution and it with Russellborough—or Bellfont, became a part of Orton by Governor Smith's purchase.

In addition to the handicaps just mentioned, Brunswick on account of its relative nearness to the sea, was vulnerable to Spanish raids, for in the time of its brief life, Britain and Spain waged a more or less undeclared war on the other's commerce. Naval stores was as valuable to the Spaniard as it was to the English and the treasures of the Spanish Main were the envy of all nations. This type of war was waged by "privateers". Bold and adventurous Captains—Owners of ships with a crew equally skilled in seamanship and fighting ability, were given "Letters of Marque", authorizing them to attack and capture merchant vessels belonging to a specified nation. Many famous, or rather infamous pirates, began as privateers who yielded to the temptation to capture vessels of other flags not in their "Letter". This more less undeclared war finally reached the overt stage when a certain British privateer named Jenkins, was captured by the Spanish, who cut off his ear and sent it to England with a warning to cease and desist in such practices. This led to open warfare—although of an indecisive result—called the "War of Jenkins' Ear". Groups of volunteers were gather-

ed from New England including a contingent of Cape Fear men, with its objective the capture and sack of the rich Spanish city, Cartagena. It was commanded by Admiral Vernon with his friend Lawrence Washington (elder brother of George Washington) in an important position. This expedition suffered a humiliating defeat (however it resulted in the new Washington home on the Potomac obtaining the name of "Mount Vernon") but the Spaniards were so little satisfied with their victory that they organized raids on the Carolina coast by their privateers. One of these attacks surprised the Town of Brunswick on September 4, 1748. Its inhabitants fled immediately, leaving the town to be pillaged and damaged severely. However they returned in time with a large body of other Cape Fear men, and routed the raiders without any loss. During the fierce fighting one of the three Spanish ships unaccountably blew up, the survivors were captured, and the Spanish commander asked for a parlay in which he offered to leave with his booty, if the fighting were called off. The Brunswick men refused point blank and finally the Spanish released their captives, and surrendered their plunder, and sailed away—a remarkable victory for civilians over what must have been a well trained and aggressive enemy. A detailed and exciting account of this episode is contained in the late Professor R. D. W. Connor's history. The proceeds of the sale of the effects of the crippled ship, and its twenty-seven survivors into slavery, were apportioned to the building of the first St. James' Church in Wilmington and St. Philip's in Brunswick. There is a painting of Christ with the Crown of Thorns—"Ecce Homo"—hanging today in the vestry of the present St. James that formerly belonged to this Spanish ship.

St. Philip's Church was completed in 1768 after many years in interrupted work, for the people of Brunswick and its neighborhood were not renowned for their piety; there were only fifteen actual Communicants in the small frame Chapel, sixteen by twenty-four feet which was used for divine services on Sundays and as a school during the week, that antedated St. Philips. In addition to the funds allocated from the spoils of the Spanish ship, a lottery had to be held to augment private donations. The walls of St. Philips measure 76 by 54 feet, its outer layer of bricks were undoubtedly imported, for their quality and texture are of the finest while the inner bricks are of such inferior grade that they must have been made locally by Richard Price, the brickmaker. They are 2 feet nine inches in thickness and nothing would have remained of them except for the fact that the local cement, produced from burning oyster shells by some process, proved far more durable than the brick. So valuable were brick to poor people that every one possible was salvaged for chimneys and fireplaces from abandoned or burned brick buildings. English bricks were a prized article for cargo ships, since their heavy weight balanced the lighter articles of import. When they were not available it was necessary to use any kind of rock for ballast. In addition to the difficulty of obtaining funds for the construction, a further delay was caused in the destruction of the first roof by a severe hurricane which also damaged badly several buildings in the town. When completed, St. Philip's was described by Governor Dobbs as the largest Church in the province, and, in Professor Lee's opinion, one of the fine Churches of Colonial America. A list of tombs in St. Philips' churchyard is contained in the appendix.

During the summer of 1958, the site of Brunswick town is being cleared by the Department of Archives and History under the personal super-

vision of Professor E. Lawrence Lee. So far a number of foundations have been located from an ancient map. The land comprising the remains of the town was given to the state by the Parish of St. James, and by J. L. Sprunt and his sons, and established as a State Historical Site. It is expected that Professor Lee's labor of love will be carried further by the Department of Archives and History and that the remains of old Brunswick will provide an addition to the Lower Cape Fear's attractions.



Reproduction of map made
at the turn of the century.

Other Lower Cape Fear Plantations

The following list of other Lower Cape Fear Plantations is contained in Colonel Alfred Moore Waddell's "*History of New Hanover County*". In many instances a short history of the original owners and their successors was included but are not copied fully here.

Governor's Point—The southernmost estate on the river, so named because Governor Burrington bought it from the first grantee, John Porter.

Howe's Point—Job Howe, a grandson of Governor James Moore (the first) of South Carolina. It was situated in the rear of a colonial fort, built as a defense against pirates. General Robert Howe of Revolutionary fame was a son of Job Howe.

York—Owned by Nathaniel Moore, a brother of Col. Maurice Moore and "King" Roger Moore.

Russellboro—Too small to be termed a plantation and referred to in Orton's Story as the scene of the first armed resistance to British rule.

Orton—

Kendal—Sold to "King" Roger by Col. Maurice Moore. Sold in 1765 by George Moore (son of King Roger) to John Davis, Jr. It was later owned by the McRee family and by James Smith, brother of Governor Benjamin Smith. It was purchased by James Sprunt in 1920 from the estate of Mr. Frederick Kidder, its last owner.

Lilliput—Granted in 1725 to Eleazar Allen, one of the most prominent of the Cape Fear settlers. Also owned by the McRee family and purchased along with Kendal by James Sprunt from the Kidder Estate.

Pleasant Oaks—Granted to the widow of John Moore (another brother of "King" Roger) in 1728. For years the home of the Taylor family. Presently owned and developed by Mr. and Mrs. Hargrove Bellamy of Wilmington.

NOW LEAVING THE RIVER AND FOLLOWING UP OLD TOWN CREEK, ONLY A FEW PLANTATIONS CAN BE RECALLED

Rice's Plantation—Owned by Nathaniel Rice, one of the prominent early settlers and one time acting governor of the province.

Spring Garden—John Baptista Ashe bought it from Maurice Moore 1727—name changed to "Gravelly".

Belgrange—2500 acres originally owned by Chief Justice Hasell.

Hullfields—Owned by Shencking Moore, son of Nathaniel and sold to John McKenzie.

Davis Plantation—Sold to John Davis by Eleazar Allen in 1744.

Dalrymple Place—Sold by the executors of John Watters to John Dalrymple 1744.

Dobbs Place—Owned by Governor Dobbs—originally by the Ashe family.

RETURNING NOW TO THE MOUTH OF OLD TOWN CREEK AND PROCEEDING NORTH ON THE CAPE FEAR

Old Town—Bought in 1761 by Judge Maurice Moore from his brother General James Moore, and sold in 1768 by John Ancrum, one of the early settlers. Home of the Cowan family until the Civil War.

Clarendon—Origin of name unknown, owned by a Mr. Campbell and afterwards by Mr. Joseph Watters.

The Forks—Owned by Richard Eagles in 1736, sold to John Davis and later to Mr. Joseph Eagles.

Buchoi—Owned by Judge Alfred Moore. This odd name is derived from a South Carolina Indian word "Boo-chawee".

Bellville—Owned by Mr. John Waddell, son of General Hugh Waddell. He also owned three other plantations farther up the river.

Belvedere—Owned by Col. Wm. Dry and later by Governor Benjamin Smith.

BETWEEN THE FORKS OF THE RIVER OPPOSITE WILMINGTON WAS

Negro Head Point Plantation—At an early period belonged to Colonel Peter Mallett, from that time to the present has been called Point Peter.

Hilton—Bought some time later by Mr. Wm. H. Hill hence Hilton.

Halton Lodge—Owned by Col. Robert Halton, one of the founders of Wilmington.

San Souci—Owned by Cabet Grainger, Sr., son of Joshua Grainger, one of the founders of Wilmington. He was a prominent Mason and after having bought from George Moore the land on which Masonboro was settled, is believed to have given it that name in honor of the Order.

Rock Hill—Owned by John Davis.

Rose Hill—Owned by Richard Quince who bought Orton from the grandson of "King" Roger.

Rocky Run—Owned by Maurice Jones.

Cedar Grove—The home of the de Rossets. Colonel Waddell includes brief history of this prominent family.

The Hermitage—Home of the Burgwins.

Castle Haynes—Owned by Capt. Roger Haynes.

Point Pleasant—Owned by Colonel James Innes a famous soldier who left the bulk of his estate to educate children of parents who were unable to pay for teachers.

The Oaks—Resident of Samuel Swann, a most prominent and influential citizen who with Edward Mosely published the first book printed in the Province. His residence was the finest on the Cape Fear.

Swann Point—John Swann's home, also one of the finest.

Spring Garden—Home of Frederick Jones.

Mt. Gallant—Col. John Pugh Williams.

Pleasant Hall—William Davis.

Hyrnham—Bought in 1736 from Col. Maurice Moore by Captain Edward Hyrne.

Springfield—

Strawberry

The Vats—These three plantations are in the center of the Rocky Point settlement, all contained in the original grant to Colonel Maurice Moore in 1725. Here it was that Col. Moore defeated Governor Burrington's attempt to claim a part of this area. Col. Moore and his two famous sons, Judge Maurice Moore and General James Moore, were buried here.

Clayton Hall—Residence of Francis Clayton, a prominent citizen, who became a loyalist. It was bought by Col. Sam Ashe, (son of Governor Sam Ashe) who lived until 1836, and was the grandfather of Captain Samuel A. Court Ashe, a veteran of the Civil War and author of the best history of North Carolina.

Green Hill—Home of General John Ashe of Stamp Act and Revolutionary fame.

Moseley Hall—Owned by Col. Sampson Moseley, son of the "distinguished Edward Moseley, whose career in the early history of North Carolina marks him as perhaps the most accomplished man of his era, as well as the ablest."

The Neck—Residence of Governor Sam Ashe who with his family is buried there. His son, John Baptista Ashe, was also elected governor but died before taking his seat.

Moorefields—George Moore, son of "King" Roger after selling Kendal in 1765 moved to his Moorefields Plantation. He was married twice and had twenty-eight children. He left two evidences (Colonel Waddell says "two other evidences"!) of his industry in the form of an immense long ditch and embankment called to this day (1909) the Devil's Ditch because of the rapidity of the work on it, and a perfectly straight road from Moorefields to his summer place on Masonboro Sound, a distance of about 15 miles, all done with his own slaves. According to tradition his method of changing his residence was to distribute his household effects among fifty or more of his slaves to start the procession on foot along this road, he and his family accompanying them on horseback.

Stag Park—The last and uppermost estate on the west side of Northeast River. A name given by the first explorers under Hilton. Governor Burrington located there an old "Blank Patent" issued in 1711 which, it was alleged, be altered from 640 to 5000 acres. He later conveyed it to the Strudwick family.

Bowlands—Located somewhere in this neighborhood and owned by John Rutherford. It was visited by Miss Janet Schaw and referred to several times in her diary. Professor Andrews states that a son of John Rutherford commanded one of Nelson's war ships at the battle of Trafalgar.

Lillington Hall—Situated on the opposite side of the river (the east side). It was the home of General Alexander Lillington, hero of the battle of Moore's Creek where the loyalist Scotch Highlanders were defeated decisively.

The Bluff—Situated on the Northwest River four miles from Wilmington owned by Captain Gabourel noted for his choleric temper. A ferry was operated there to Wilmington in 1736 and by Cornelius Harnett, Sr., in 1739.

Cobham—One of several plantations above the Bluff owned by Dr. Thomas Cobham, a leading physician at an early period. Referred to frequently by Miss Schaw.

Prospect—Original owner not known, eventually owned by Maj. John Walker, nephew of the famous Major "Jack" Walker, of the Revolution.

Schawfields—Owned by Robert Schaw, brother of the diarist Miss Janet Schaw. In Tryon's expedition of 1771 he was a colonel of artillery under General Waddell.

Mulberry—Owned by the father of William Watters later by the Hall family.

Dallison—Property of Colonel John Dollison of whom there was no record.

Auburn and Magnolia—Belonged to the Watters and Hall families.

Point Repose—Bought in 1735 and settled in 1739 by James Murray, the protege of Governor Gabriel Johnston and one of the governors men in opposition to "King" Roger Moore and his faction called "The Family" by Murray. Col. Waddell gives a long account of James Murray. Murray's correspondence was collected by collateral descendants and published in Boston around 1905. Murray was a loyalist and after departing from the Cape Fear and resettling in New England, was forced to move to Canada at the outbreak of the Revolution. *Point Repose* was bought by his nephew, Gen. Thomas Clark, a gallant Revolutionary officer, who was the largest creditor.

Oakland—In Bladen County was the home of General Thomas Brown, a Colonial and Revolutionary officer of distinction. His first wife was a niece of the distinguished botanist Wm. Bartram. General Brown's home is still intact, it and Orton being the only plantation homes of any prominence that have survived.

Belfont—The residence of General Hugh Waddell one of the most famous personages of Colonial times, and ancestor of Colonel Alfred Moore Waddell, the distinguished historian and citizen of this region.

Owen Hill—Home of Col. Thomas Owen, a hero of the battle of Camden and father of Governor John Owen who married Elizabeth, daughter of General Thomas Brown.

Laurens—Near Elizabethtown, owned by Colonel James Morehead.

Brompton—Owned by Governor Gabriel Johnston; his brother Gilbert lived there and Gilbert's sons inherited it. Here General Francis Marion, Huger, the Horrys and others, met to reorganize Marion's men, a large proportion of whom were North Carolinians from Bladen and Brunswick Counties.

There were other prominent Estates in Bladen County situated away from the river which Colonel Waddell does not name.

On the east side of the river, below Wilmington and between the river and the sound were only a few estates and the soil was not adaptable to cultivation—they were largely summer places of the wealthy landowners.

These sixty odd named plantations along the branches of the Cape Fear and its tributaries occupied practically all the valuable lands of the Lower Cape Fear and were in possession of a relatively few. The great migration of impoverished Scotch Highlanders and Scotch Irish and others who came to North Carolina prior to the Revolution could not obtain suitable land for settlement here, for the plantation owners were not disposed to part with any of their holdings under terms practicable for these newcomers. In consequence they were forced to go inland and suffer the handicap of isolation. However, their industry laid the foundation for an ultimately prosperous area based on manufacturing, rather than the ownership of slaves.

At the end of the Revolution they were able to force the seat of government from New Bern to Raleigh and later in the era of the railroad their prosperity far eclipsed the older and one-time wealthier eastern sections. The abolition of slavery brought about the almost complete abandonment of the famous plantations of the Lower Cape Fear. Except in a few instances, even their names have been forgotten.



Kate Moore gathering rice on Orton Plantation Fields—about 1890.

How Rice Was Grown

The following text and illustrations* from Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper of October 20, 1866 gives a graphic contemporary description of a once important North Carolina crop.

Late rumors, somewhat affecting the market, that, owing to peculiar conditions of weather and atmosphere, there may possibly be a considerable failure of the Carolina rice-crop, have given a particular pertinence to the illustration which we this week give of the mode of culture of that valuable cereal. There is reason to believe, now, that these rumors were founded upon local exaggeration; but the relieving of that fear, which made it doubtful whether the pet dishes of "rice-and-milk" and "rice-pudding" would not be rendered more costly in our homes and restaurants, does not take away from the interest inevitably connected with the culture of a crop just now in process of marketing.

*Please note: References to illustrations and views contained in this reprint are as appeared in the original article. It is impractical to reproduce these pictures or drawings, and the references have been retained in order to conform to the original text.

It has been more than half-believed, by the way, by many of our Northern people, that, now that slavery was abolished, there would be no more rice raised in the United States, as the negroes were averse to laboring in the swamps. But such is not the fact. All labor performed by slaves was laid out in tasks, which had to be done every day. A task in the rice-field has always been easier than one in a cotton or corn-field, and the hands always have the advantage of a breeze from some river, unobstructed by hills or trees. The ground is always damp, also and after a negro is acclimated, he prefers it to any other labor. He commences work at daylight, and breakfasts at seven o'clock; at eight he commences again, and generally finishes his task by two o'clock, having the balance of the day for his own pleasure. It was so under slave rule, and is so now; and at three o'clock the Northerners are often surprised to see sixty stout hands hang up their hoes and all go fishing, "their own men" for the balance of the day!

The illustrations in this number were taken by our artist on the plantation leased by Major J. C. Mann, near Wilmington, North Carolina, which was owned by General Robert Howe, of Revolutionary fame. His house on the plantation was destroyed by the British forces. In the distance is seen the Cape Fear River. In the foreground is seen a "bird-minder," whose whole care is to frighten away the rice-birds, which are the greatest pest with which the planter has to deal. These birds congregate in immense numbers, and would ruin a crop in a short time if it were not for constant vigilance. The rice-fields are divided by banks, as seen in the engraving, and then are subdivided by ditches and small canals aid in "flowing" the fields as well as to draw off the water when required. Rice may be planted at any time from April 10th to June 10th, but the earlier the better, in order to get "ahead of the birds." After the ground has been "trenched" the "sowers" come with their gourds filled with rice, and drop it into the trenches cut by the men. This work of sowing is done by young women and boys, who work with great rapidity, going almost on a full run, stooping over and watching their gourds. As much depends upon this, great care is taken in the selection of sowers. The fields are then flooded and kept under water until the rice is up, and if a good "stand," is at once weeded, but if not, it stands in the sun if the weather is warm, to force more sprouts from the seed. It is then hoed and again flooded. In about ten days the water is drawn off, and the second hoeing and weeding begins, which requires great care, as the grass which springs up among the plants resembles the rice so nearly that none but the old experienced hands are allowed to weed, an operation which requires to be done entirely by hand. After the field is carefully weeded, as clean as they weed onions in Connecticut, the water is again let on for the "long flow." If the rice gets "sick" the water is drawn off, and a new supply let on. The crop matures in a little over four months, and is then cut by hand, as in the engraving. It is then thrashed, either by hand, as is usual, or by an ordinary thrashing machine—then run through a fan-mill, and is then ready for market, but not for consumption, as it has a tough hull upon it, which requires to be removed by machinery, and the grains polished.

In View No. 7 is seen a "trunk" with which the water is held in check; it is under the special care of the overseer, as the entire year's labor depends upon his knowledge of the condition of the crop and the proper time to flow or draw off the water. The temperature of the water as well as the atmosphere has much to do with it, and should these trunks or gates get out

of repair, and let the water on or off even for one night, it might utterly destroy the crop. Mr. Scott, who has charge of the plantation under notice, is a New Englander, who has mastered the science and manages the crop with great ability. As the water of the Cape Fear is salt at this point, and salt water is poison to rice, the main canals from the artificial ponds are controlled by "gates," as seen in Engraving No. 8. When the water is drawn off the fields into the canals again, it is let into the river at low tide, as at high tide the waters are much higher than the fields. They are protected, however, by large banks, something like the levees on the Mississippi. With which brief and, yet it is hoped, satisfactory condensation, we must leave the subject, confident that the readers of "Frank Leslie's" will know at least something more than before of the origin of their beloved "rice-pudding."

MICHAEL W. NLY.

WILKES MORRIS.

Office of CRONLY & MORRIS,
AUCTIONEERS,
STOCK AND REAL ESTATE BROKERS,

WILMINGTON, N. C., June 22d, 1872.

ORTON PLANTATION,

—AND—

Lands Adjacent Thereto, 9,026 Acres by Actual Survey,

—AT—

PUBLIC AUCTION,

On THURSDAY, AUGUST 22d, 1872.

M. CRONLY, Auctioneer.

BY CRONLY & MORRIS.

Pursuant to an order of the Superior Court of this County, the undersigned, Commissioners appointed by said Court, will proceed to sell by Public Auction, at the Court House, in SMITHVILLE, North Carolina, on THURSDAY, AUGUST 22d, 1872, at 12 o'clock M., all that VALUABLE PLANTATION and TIMBERED LANDS adjacent thereto, lying in the County of Brunswick, well and favorably known to all in this locality as "ORTON," containing by actual survey 9,026 Acres.

This Plantation is situated upon the West side of Cape Fear River, 15 miles below this City (within 6 miles of the Ocean), and has a front of over two (2) miles upon Cape Fear River, COVERING 300 ACRES OF SUPERIOR RICE LAND, of which 235 acres have produced 16,300 bushels (these lands are unsurpassed for small Grain and Grasses), with 8,000 ACRES OF PINE, and a large assortment of LIVE OAK TIMBER.

An immense WATER POWER, from a Pond 7 miles in length, 12 feet head of Water (unfailing), with many desirable sites for SAW MILLS, COTTON or other MANUFACTORIES, TURPENTINE DISTILLERIES, &c.

The lands abound in Deer and other Game, the Pond is well stocked with Fish of the finest varieties, and it is opposite and accessible to the New Inlet Fisheries.

The Improvements consist of a TWO STORY DWELLING HOUSE, containing 10 Rooms, Brick Basement, with all necessary Out-Houses, extensive Barns, Stables, &c., with Houses detached for 200 HANDS.

This extensive Plantation, the late Palatial Residence of Dr. F. J. HILL, deceased, valued prior to 1861 at \$100,000.00 must be thoroughly viewed and examined in person to realize its value to the Agriculturist and Capitalist, as it will be sold at a great sacrifice (not one-third, probably, of its original cost) to satisfy the demands of creditors.

TERMS OF SALE.—One-third purchase money in Cash, the residue in six and twelve months, with interest from day of sale.

For further particulars address the undersigned or CRONLY & MORRIS, Auctioneers.

DuBRUTZ CUTLAR, }
C. M. STEDMAN, } *Commissioners.*

Shown above is a reproduction of an interesting auctioneer's handbill, advertising the sale of Orton Plantation in 1872, by creditors of the then abandoned plantation.

Appendix

The graveyard immediately east of St. Philip's contains the following marked tombs:

"The Hon. William Dry, Jr. who moved here from Goose Creek, South Carolina in 1736, was collector of the port and a member of the Council, died June 3, 1795.

Rebecca McGuire, daughter of William Dry, Jr., and wife of Thomas McGuire, Attorney-General.

Jane Quince, wife of John Quince, died in 1765.

John Lord, a native of the town of Brunswick, died August 28, 1831, aged 66 years.

William Hill, died August 23, 1783, and his wife, died November 3, 1788.

John Guerard "for many years an inhabitant of Cape Fear, snatched by a sudden stroke of fate from life April 25, 1789.

Elizabeth Guerard, died June 30, 1775 aged 18 years.

Elizabeth Eagen died June, 1785, aged 60 years.

Benjamin Smith "of Belvedere, once Governor of North Carolina, died January 10, 1826.

Mary Jane Dry, wife of William Dry, Jr., born January 21, 1729, died April 3, 1795.

Mary Quince, wife of Richard Quince, died 1762.

Elizabeth Lord, died February 26, 1847.

Mary Bacot, died August 29, 1838, aged 75 years.

Peter Maxwell, of Glasgow, died at Wilmington September 23, 1838 aged 59 years, and wife Rebecca Maxwell, died February 12, 1810.

Alfred Moore, Associate Justice, U. S. Supreme Court and son of Colonel Maurice Moore.

Governor Dobb's body was buried within the walls of the Church, and there is no marker to identify its location. Fortunately this list was recorded many years ago, by the late William B. McKoy for nowadays (1957) many of the epitaphs are becoming illegible. The tombs suffered heavy damage in the bombardment of Fort Anderson, and after their repair by the Colonial Dames, became a favorite target of vandals (who did not understand the warning on the grave stone of young Rebecca McGuire: "quisque hoc marmor sustulerit ultimus suorum moriatur".

In Colonial days, owners of plantations were required by law to set aside certain areas for burial grounds. The one at Orton contains the following marked graves.

Here rests King Roger Moore

Granted 8,000 acres by the Lords Proprietors in 1720.

He built older part of Orton Mansion in 1725.

Also three other monuments of brick containing presumably, King Rogers' two wives and William Moore:

In Memory of
Louisa Catharine
Eldest daughter of J. G. & M. A. Burr
Born Feb 1 1843 Died Sept 6 1852
Age 9 yrs 7 mo 6 days
Of Such is the Kingdom of Heaven

Mrs. Catharine Ann Berry
Relic of
James A. Berry,
Was born 3rd of October 1803
Died 20th August 1844
Elevated in Sentiment
Ardent and firm in her affections
Pure generous and disinterested by nature
the Christian virtues
crowned her with their graces
and as She lived admired trusted and loved
So she died lamented and mourned
In the blissful hope of a glorious immortality

Sacred to the Memory of
James A Berry who died
22nd Nov. 1832 Aged 32 yrs.
Brave Generous and Kind
Honorable and Devout
A Gentleman and A Christian

John Hill MD
Died
May 9 1847 Aged
51 yrs.

In Memory of Mary Ivie
Wife of
Warren Winslow of
Fayetteville & Daughter of
John D. Toomer
Born May 12, 1811
Died May 22, 1843

Brunswick was totally abandoned during the Revolutionary War after Cornwallis' raiding party destroyed many of its remaining houses. A

skirmish took place between a small group of native militia and the British a few hundred yards West of the Church, near a small pond visible from the exit road to route 40. This has been known ever since as "Liberty Pond". The authorities sold the site of Brunswick and Russellborough to Benjamin Smith for five dollars and some cents, doubtless to restore them to the tax list, or may be in deference to him.

During the Civil War the Confederates constructed Fort Anderson around the walls of St. Philip's, as an auxiliary to the all important Fort Fisher across the river at the ocean end of New Inlet, the main channel of commerce (now blocked off by a rock wall) used during the War, by blockade runners. At the fall of Fort Fisher, the Federal fleet steamed into the river and began the bombardment of Fort Anderson.

For some years in the past, it was the custom of the Colonial Dames to hold a picnic and meeting around the walls of St. Philip's, climaxed by an address on the history of the locality by eminent authorities, and on May 1st 1900 the address of the year was delivered by Captain Eugene S. Martin, entitled "Defense of Fort Anderson, 1865". After a graceful preamble and a dramatic account of Fort Fisher's fall, and of other Confederate strongholds, Captain Martin's address reaches its climax:

"On the 16th of February Schofield's Corps arrived at Fort Fisher, was transported by steamer to Smithville that night and marched from there on the 17th to attack this fort (Anderson). Our lines were here and constituted a part of the exterior lines of the defenses of the City of Wilmington.

The fort proper was commanded by Colonel Hedrick with the Fortieth North Carolina Regiment; on his right was Moseley's Battery of Whitworth guns, then came the light artillery around this Church, then Major MacRae's Command, and on our extreme right Colonel Simonton's Regiment and other South Carolina troops, the whole under the command of General Johnston Hagood, afterwards Governor of South Carolina. His headquarters were on the road to Orton.

On the morning of February 17th 1865 the monitors and gunboats of the Federals moved up near the fort and opened fire, while the army of General Schofield advanced upon our lines. Shells from the monitors and gunboats were bursting incessantly over this place, some of which destroyed many of the tombs around the Church. Standing upon that parapet I saw an eleven inch Dahlgren shell strike that Church and glance, then burst, a large piece passing between Colonel Hedrick and myself, cutting his sword from his side. All day Friday and Saturday the bombardment continued and Saturday night some time after midnight, the evacuation of the fort took place. I being Chief of the Artillery and Ordnance on the Staff of the Commanding General at that time, was sent down into the fort late at night to execute certain orders after the troops had departed, and thus was the last man to leave the fort. Some of the dead were still in the gun chambers and along the lines, while some had been carried into that sacred Edifice and lay there with their pale faces turned toward the silent stars above them - - -".

The Federal troops removed the corner stone of the Church and proceeded on to the capture of Wilmington, leaving their sick and wounded in Orton's house. They left behind them however an interesting link between the old order, that they had destroyed, and the new, in the form of a former house slave of a prominent Charleston family. When discovered

around 1890 by Mrs. Sprunt he was living alone in a one room cabin in the woods near St. Philips, on a small Federal pension. His appearance was striking—tall and slightly stooped from rheumatism, with jet black skin, thick white hair and pointed beard, both always, and somehow, neatly trimmed—his deep resonant voice and courtly manner matched his imposing exterior. He was held in awe, and great respect, by the simple country colored folk who lived on the plantation, some of the more ignorant considered him a witch. He soon became a protege of Mrs. Sprunt and visits to his cabin became an occasional entertainment to members of the family and their guests, who listened with interest to the old man's tales of Charleston society in the heydays of its glamor. Only Colonel Murchison disapproved of him and remarked without rancor, "Jeffrey, you are an old fraud".

The young members of the family were entranced by his stories and followed them with absorbed interest reminiscent of "Uncle Remus" and the "Little Boy"—only "Uncle" Jeffrey Lawrence—as he was named—used very good language without any of the accent of his color, and had been taught to read, an unusual accomplishment in a slave. One of his experiences comes to mind when as a big boy he met on a street in Charleston, two tiny colored urchins covered from head to foot with soot—they were chimney sweeps just off a job and their ludicrous appearance made Jeffrey stop in his tracks and burst into laughter. The more he laughed, the more annoyed became the little sweeps. When they could endure such derision no longer, they dug simultaneously into the large bags of soot slung over their shoulders and began pelting Jeffrey with it, first in his eyes to render him helpless, and then from top to bottom until he appeared a larger edition of themselves. Uncle Jeffrey would then join in with the children's hearty laughter and proceed with another tale.

His small cabin was kept immaculate and Uncle Jeffrey's even cleaned his clay bowl pipes by dropping them in the fireplace midst the red hot coals. They would come out bright white again.

The last winters of his life were spent in Wilmington in a comfortable room in the semi basement of the Sprunt home. Uncle Jeffrey considered it no part of a guest to do any work and left the care of his room to the servants. He died about 1910 some time after being presented to President Taft at a reception in the Sprunt's home.

